



# DELTA STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

A California State Agency

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July 14, 2011

Mr. Michael Machado, Executive Director  
Delta Protection Commission  
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EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
P. Joseph Grindstaff

Dear Mr. Machado:

I commend you and the Delta Protection Commission (Commission) on the expeditious development of the first consultant-prepared draft of the Economic Sustainability Plan (Plan) for public review and comment. I understand that this was accomplished on a tight schedule and that you and your team are working diligently to develop a final Plan in time to inform the Delta Plan. I am writing to offer some suggestions for your consideration in development of your final Plan.

In Public Resources Code section 29759 the Legislature set certain guidelines for the Plan.

*...The economic sustainability plan shall include information and recommendations that inform the Delta Stewardship Council's policies regarding the socioeconomic sustainability of the Delta region.  
(b) The economic sustainability plan shall include, but not be limited to, all of the following:*

- (1) Public safety recommendations, such as flood protection recommendations.*
- (2) The economic goals, policies, and objectives in local general plans and other local economic efforts, including recommendations on continued socioeconomic sustainability of agriculture and its infrastructure and legacy communities in the Delta.*
- (3) Comments and recommendations to the Department of Water Resources concerning its periodic update of the flood management plan for the Delta.*
- (4) Identification of ways to encourage recreational investment along the key river corridors, as appropriate.*

Importantly, the Legislature envisioned that the Plan would be developed so that upon adoption by the Commission it would be consistent with the Delta Stewardship Council's Delta Plan (Public Resources Code 29761.5).

Acknowledging that the Commission is currently in the drafting process, I feel that this is the appropriate time to offer specific suggestions for how the Commission might structure the final Plan in order to be most beneficial to, and consistent with, the ongoing development of the Delta Plan, as well as the coequal goals.

Coequal goals means the two goals of providing a more reliable water supply for California and protecting, restoring, and enhancing the Delta ecosystem. The coequal goals shall be achieved in a manner that protects and enhances the unique cultural, recreational, natural resource, and agricultural values of the Delta as an evolving place.

Mr. Michael Machado  
July 14, 2011  
Page Two

The final Plan should include specific recommendations regarding the best investments for a sustainable Delta regional economy. These recommendations should stand regardless of whether the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP) is eventually approved and implemented. Under the most optimistic scenario, the BDCP will not be complete for several more years, and taking into consideration possible litigation or other post-approval implementation delays, it is expected to be at least a decade before large-scale restoration or construction would occur.

Moreover, in the 2009 Delta Reform legislation, the Legislature declared that the Commission is the *"appropriate agency to identify and provide recommendations to the Delta Stewardship Council on methods of preserving the Delta as an evolving place"* for purposes of informing the Council's Delta Plan (Public Resources Code 29703.5).

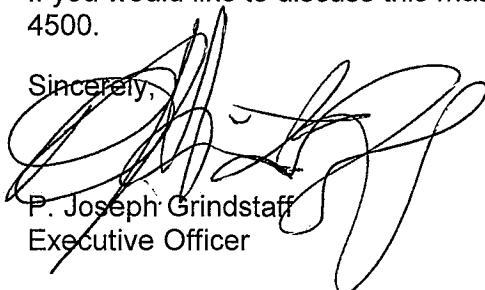
With this in mind, I offer the following suggestions for the development of your Plan:

- The Plan should offer no-regrets investment strategies for the Delta including the investment costs and potential funding sources or strategies to support those investments
- Within those strategies, a list of targeted near term investments which would result in immediate local benefits for the Delta should be prepared
- The Plan should include more specific recommendations related to improving or enhancing recreational opportunities in the Delta
- The Plan should better quantify the potential for Delta regional economic impacts (beneficial in addition to adverse) from ecosystem restoration projects
- The Plan should include long-term strategies for legacy communities vital to the tourist economy of the region
- The Plan should identify infrastructure of local economic importance

Working together now will help ensure that our two plans are complementary in nature and can best serve to protect and enhance the unique cultural, recreational, natural resource, and agricultural values of the Delta as an evolving place.

If you would like to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 445-4500.

Sincerely,



P. Joseph Grindstaff  
Executive Officer

cc: Mark Cowin, Director, Department of Water Resources  
Campbell, Ingram, Executive Officer, Delta Conservancy  
Delta Stewardship Council Members  
John Laird, Secretary, California Natural Resources Agency  
Jerry Meral, Deputy Secretary, California Natural Resources Agency